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BOOK NOTICES.

Report of the Intercontinental Railway Commission, in three volumes, volume one being in two parts, with three portfolios of maps. Quarto. Washington, 1898.

This magnificent series of reports and maps are the tangible results of extensive surveys made during the years 1891-2-3 under the joint auspices of the United States and the Central and South American countries, for the discovery of a feasible railway route, connecting North, Central and South America.

It will be recalled that this work is one of the results of a conference invited by this country and participated in by the representatives of most of the republics of Central and South America, which met in 1889, for the purpose of promoting closer commercial relations among the countries of America. The most important recommendation of this conference was for a survey and exploration of practicable railroad routes connecting these countries, and providing that the expenses of the survey and exploration be defrayed by the respective countries in amounts proportional to their population. This recommendation was carried out, the work has been executed, and these volumes and maps form the report upon it.

The work was carried on by three parties. Party No. 1 executed the survey in Central America from Ayutla, near the south boundary of Mexico, southeastward through Costa Rica. Party No. 2 surveyed a line northward from Quito through Ecuador and Colombia; and Party No. 3 southward from Quito to Cuzco, Peru. Work was commenced early in the summer of 1891 and concluded in June or July, 1893. The total expenses of the survey amounted to nearly \$300,000, including publication. Of this the United States contributed \$245,000, or about five-sixths of the whole. This country contributed not only its full quota in money, but also the expenses of printing the report, amounting to \$50,000. It is interesting to note to what extent other nations bore their share of the burden. Ecuador and Guatemala contributed their full quota; Brazil and Costa Rica two-thirds of their quota, and Bolivia, Chile and Colombia one-third only, while the other countries contributed nothing.

Volume I, part I, gives in 164 pages a history of the Commission, the character of the field work of the survey and a summary

of the reports of the three divisions, including a physiographic and economic description of the territory examined. In a pocket at the end of the volume are maps and profiles, including a map of America, showing routes explored: of Central America, of Colombia, of Ecuador and Peru, and of parts of Mexico, all on a scale of 1:1,800,000; of parts of Peru, Chile, Bolivia, Argentina and Brazil, on a scale of 1:5,400,000, and maps of parts of Mexico on a scale of 1:600,000.

Volume I, part II, consists of a detailed report of the work of corps No. 1; Volume II, of corps No. 2, and Volume III, of corps No. 3. All these reports are printed both in English and Spanish, and each volume is accompanied by a portfolio of maps and profiles illustrating the routes and adjacent country. The maps are upon a uniform scale of 1:48,000, and the relief is expressed by contour lines. Drainage is printed in blue, culture in black, and relief in brown. The surveyed routes are printed in red.

This work is one of the most notable contributions to descriptive geography which has been made in recent times. The line of survey traverses the volcanic regions of Central America, and, south of the Isthmus of Panama, it soon reaches the high Andean plateau, the summit of which it follows for several degrees of latitude, keeping at great altitudes above the sea. In connection with this line of survey a belt of country of variable width has been mapped, in many cases including the summits of high peaks, and altogether including an enormous area of unknown or little-known land.

The dress of the report is in keeping with its value. It is well printed on heavy paper, beautifully illustrated with half-tones, and the maps are finely engraved and printed.

H. G.

Physical Geography; William Morris Davis, assisted by William Henry Snyder: Ginn & Co., Boston, and London, 1898. Pp. XVIII+428, with 261 illustrations and 9 plates.

Davis's *Physical Geography for Secondary Schools* has received a very hearty and much-deserved welcome from all interested in the subject, and especially from secondary school and academy teachers. It is by far the best book for the schools for which it is intended, and will undoubtedly do more to benefit the cause of physical geography teaching than any of its predecessors.

Omitting a brief and suggestive introduction, the book may be divided into four parts: The Earth as a Globe, The Atmosphere,